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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 000925

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: Chile Reports on Divisive UNASUR Meeting

REF: QUITO 1009; LIMA 1635

CLASSIFIED BY: Paul Simons, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary. Acting FM Flisfisch told the Ambassador that the November 27 UNASUR meeting in Quito was "super tense" because of a "very disagreeable" conflict between Venezuela and Colombia on the use of military bases and counterterrorism. UNASUR finally was able to reach agreement on a resolution of confidence building measures by leaving out the points of disagreement. UNASUR also appointed a working group to merge three defense cooperation proposals put forward by Peru, Chile, and Ecuador. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) On December 1, the Ambassador met with Acting Foreign Minister Angel Flisfisch, who had represented Chile at the November 27 UNASUR Foreign Ministers meeting in Quito. Flisfisch had been heavily involved in UNASUR meetings in his previous capacity as director of the Foreign Ministry's policy planning division when Chile had served as president pro tempore of UNASUR. Flisfisch noted that there were three days of meetings, preparatory meetings on Wednesday, a Defense Ministers meeting on Thursday, and the Foreign Ministers meeting on Friday. He noted the low level of representation, with only four foreign ministers at the Friday meeting (Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, and Venezuela).

"VERY DISAGREEABLE" CONFLICT BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA

¶3. (C) Flisfisch said that the three days of Quito meetings were dominated by strong disagreements between Colombia and Venezuela. He said that the tone was very disagreeable, with conflict that he had not previously seen in UNASUR meetings. He added that Colombia was represented at a lower rank than other countries, but the Colombian representative acquitted himself very well. He said that the disagreements centered on about six or seven articles dealing with terrorism and use of military bases where Colombia and Venezuela took strongly opposing positions.

AGREEMENT BY LEAVING OUT POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT

¶4. (C) As noted in reftel a, Flisfisch said the focal point of the meeting was finalizing a resolution on confidence building measures. He said that all the participants agreed on about 80-85 percent of proposals, but because of the conflict between Venezuela and Colombia could not reach closure on the rest. Flisfisch said that the Foreign Ministers meeting drug on all day, without a lunch break. Finally, in the middle of the afternoon, Flisflisch suggested that the group needed to deliver a product and suggested that the final resolution omit the points over which there was disagreement. With FM Amorim's support, the others agreed to the Chilean proposal, and the final resolution was approved.

MERGING THREE DEFENSE COOPERATION PROPOSALS

¶5. (C) Flisfisch said that in addition to Peru's "Peace and Security Cooperation" proposal (reftel b), Chile and Ecuador tabled two proposal on defense cooperation. Flisfisch argued that Chile's proposal complements the Peruvian proposal, and that the UNASUR participants agreed to create a working group to merge the three proposals.

ECUADORIAN LEADERSHIP

¶6. (C) Flisfisch said that Ecuador tried to provide impartial leadership as the president pro tempore of UNASUR and looked for solutions to points of disagreement. He suggested that FM Falconi was relatively successful in his efforts, but noted that Falconi is constrained by Ecuador's affinity with ALBA and President Correa's own views on regional issues.
SIMONS